

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-16 and add new claims 17-40, as follows:

Claims 1-16 (canceled)

17. (new) A removable dust collector for use in a dust compartment of a vacuum cleaner comprising a holder which maintains the dust collector in an operating position, and a locking member, the locking member being placed in a locking position when the dust collector is removed, in which a lid of the dust compartment is prevented from closing, and a release position when the dust collector is in an operating position, in which the lid can be closed, the locking member being maintained in the release position by at least one of a filter bag inserted into a carrier and an actuating member coupling to the dust collector.

18. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the carrier is coupled to the locking member such that it is movably supported.

19. (new) The dust collector according to claim 18, wherein the carrier is pivotally supported on the vacuum cleaner housing by means of a pivot bearing.

20. (new) The dust collector according to claim 19, wherein the pivot bearing is arranged on a lower edge of the carrier and the actuating member acts on an upper edge of the carrier.

21. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the holder is formed by intermeshing guides which are constructed on the dust collector and on the vacuum cleaner and which represent a positioning aid to maintain the dust collector in its operating position.

22. (new) The dust collector according to claim 21, wherein the holder is formed by the actuating member which is held on the carrier in a receiver.

23. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the actuating member is constructed on the dust collector.

24. (new) The dust collector according to claim 23, wherein the actuating member is constructed as a preferably hook-shaped curved lug which acts on an edge of the carrier opposite to the pivot bearing.

25. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the actuating member has a grip area for actuating a closing element for unlocking or locking a filter housing detachably affixed to the dust collector.

26. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the actuating member is constructed in the form of a stiffening plate of a filter bag for insertion into the carrier of the filter bag.

27. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein a carrier is provided for the filter bag and a carrier is provided for the dust collector and the carrier of the dust collector has the actuating member which actuates either the locking member or the carrier.

28. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the actuating member is constructed as a positioning surface for the dust collector formed substantially at right angles to the plane of the carrier.

29. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the dust collector has a cover element which prevents a filter bag from being inserted into the carrier when the dust collector is not in the operating position.

30. (new) The dust collector according to claim 29, wherein the cover element is constructed as the actuating element.

31. (new) The dust collector according to claim 17, wherein the dust collector has a dust separator operating on the principle of centrifugal force.

32. (new) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
a housing defining a dust compartment and a cover for closing the dust compartment;
a carrier movably coupled to the housing and having at least one locking member extending outwardly from the carrier, the carrier being movable between a locking condition, in which the locking member extends beyond the housing and prevents the cover from closing the dust compartment, and a release condition, in which the locking member is retracted; and
a removable dust collector being receivable in the dust compartment and including a holder being engagable with the carrier, the carrier being in the release condition when the dust collector is positioned within the dust compartment and the holder engages the carrier, and in the locking condition when the dust collector is removed from the dust compartment and the holder disengages the carrier.

33. (new) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 33, wherein the locking member is biased toward the locking condition

34. (new) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 33, wherein the holder includes a downwardly extending actuating member having a cam surface that engages the locking member to restrict movement of the dust collector with respect to the housing when the dust collector is positioned within the dust compartment, the carrier being positioned between the actuating member and the dust collector.

35. (new) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 33, wherein the carrier includes at least two locking members extending from the carrier, the holder engaging the carrier between the locking members.

36. (new) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 33, wherein the dust collector includes a collector housing having a rigid structure defining a dust collecting compartment for retaining dust particles.

37. (new) The dust collector according to claim 33, wherein dust collector includes a filter housing detachably connected to the dust collector and having a closing element for unlocking and locking the filter housing to the dust collector, the actuating member having a grip area for actuating the closing element.

38. (new) The dust collector according to claim 33, wherein the dust collector includes a centrifugal force dust separator.

39. (new) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

- a housing defining a dust compartment and including a side wall extending in a substantially vertical direction from a lower edge to an upper edge;
- a cover connected to the housing for closing the dust compartment;
- a carrier pivotally coupled to the housing near the lower edge and extending upwardly beyond the upper edge, the carrier having at least one locking member connected to the carrier above the upper edge and projecting outwardly beyond the side wall to prevent the cover from closing the dust compartment, the carrier being movable between a locking condition, in which the locking member prevents the cover from closing the dust compartment, and a release condition, in which the locking member is retracted and the cover may engage the housing to close the dust compartment; and
- a removable dust collector being receivable in the dust compartment and including a holder being engagable with the carrier, the carrier being in the release condition when the dust collector is positioned within the dust compartment and the holder engages the carrier, and the carrier being in the locking condition when the dust collector is removed from the dust compartment and the holder disengages the carrier, the carrier being biased toward the locking condition.

40. (new) The vacuum cleaner according to claim 39, wherein the carrier includes at least two locking members extending outwardly from the carrier, the holder engaging the carrier between the locking members and the locking members restricting movement of the holder with respect to the carrier.